

What is claimed is:

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1. A method of treating a human patient suffering from a neurodegenerative disease, said method comprising:

engrafting into said patient a population of recombinant cells comprising one or more cell fate-inducing genes that permit said cells to form neurons in said patient.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said cell-fate inducing genes are one or more of Nurr-1, PTX3, Phox 2a, AP2, and Shh.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said cells are made by the steps of:

a) obtaining one or more stem cells,

b) transfecting said one or more stem cells with said one or more cell fate inducing genes,

c) selecting one or more transfectants from step b), and

d) expanding said one or more selected transfectants from step c) to form said population of recombinant cells.

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4. The method of claim 3, wherein step d) comprises inducing cell division using a growth factor.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein said growth factor is leukemia inhibitory factor.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said cells are made by the steps of:

- a) obtaining one or more stem cells,
- b) expanding said one or more stem cells, and
- c) transfecting multiple cells in the expanded cells from step b) with said one or more cell fate inducing genes to form said population of recombinant cells.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein step b) comprises inducing cell division using a growth factor.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said growth factor is leukemia inhibitory factor.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said one or more cell fate inducing genes permit said cells to form dopaminergic neurons.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said recombinant cells are a homogenous cell population of a specific neuronal cell-type.

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